

The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing:
We are beastly; subtle as the Fox for prey;
Like warlike as the Wolfe, for what we care:
Our Valour is to chase what flies: Our Cage
We make a Quire, as doth the prison'd Bird,
And sing our Bondage freely.

Bel. How you speake.

Did you but know the Cities Villes,
And felt them knowingly: the Art o'th' Court,
As hard to leaue, as keepe: whose top to climbe
Is certaine falling: or so slipp'ry, that
The feare's as bad as falling: The toyle o'th' Warre,
A paine that onely seemes to seeke out danger
I'th' name of Fame, and Honor, which dyes i'th' search,
And hath as oft a slanderous Epitaph,
As Record of faire Act. Nay, many times
Doth ill deserue, by doing well: what's worse
Must curt'sie at the Censure. Oh Boyes, this Storie
The World may read in me: My bodie's mark'd
With Roman Swords; and my report, was once
First, with the best of Note. *Cymbeline* lou'd me,
And when a Souldier was the Theame, my name
Was not farre off: then was I as a Tree
Whose boughes did bend with fruit. But in one night,
A Storme, or Robbery (call it what you will)
Shooke downe my mellow hangings: nay my Leaues,
And left me bare to weather.

Gai. Vncertaine saour.

Bel. My fault being nothing (as I haue told you of)
But that two Villaines, whose false Oathes preuayl'd
Before my perfect Honor, swore to *Cymbeline*,
I was Confederate with the Romanes: so
Followed my Banishment, and this twenty yeeres,
This Rocke, and these Desmesnes, haue bene my World,
Where I haue liu'd as honest freedome, payed
More pious debts to Heauen, then in all
The fore-end of my time. But, vp to th' Mountaines,
This is not Hunters Language; he that strikes
The Venison first, shall be the Lord o'th' Feast,
To him the other two shall minister,
And we will feate no poyson, which attends
In place of greater State:
He meete you in the Valleys.

Exeunt.
How hard it is to hide the sparkes of Nature?
These Boyes know little they are Sonnes to th' King,
Nor *Cymbeline* dreames that they are aloue.
They thinke they are mine.

And though train'd vp thus meanelly
I'th' Caue, whereon the Bowe their thoughts do hit,
The Roofes of Palaces, and Nature prompts them
In simple and lowe things, to Rincee it, much
Beyond the pickes of others. This *Paladour*,
The heyre of *Cymbeline* and Britaine, who
The King his Father call'd *Gunderius*. Ioue,
When on my three-foot Stool I sit, and tell
The warlike feats I haue done, his spirits flye out
Into my Story: say thus mine Enemy fell,
And thus I fer my foote on's necke, even then
The Princely blood flowes in his Cheeke, he sweats,
Straines his yong Nerves, and pursh himselfe in posture
That acts my words. The yonger Brother *Cadwall*,
Once *Arviragus*, in as like a figure
Strikes life into my speech, and shewes much more
His owne conceyuing. Hearke, the Game is row's'd,
Oh *Cymbeline*, Heauen and my Conscience knowes
Thou didst vnjustly banish me: whereon

At three, and two yeeres old, I stole these Babes,
Thinking to barre thee of Succession, as
Thou rests me of my Lands. *Euriphile*,
Thou wast their Nurse, they took thee for their mother,
And euery day do honor to her graue:
My selfe *Belarius*, that am *Morgan* call'd
They take for Naturall Father. The Game is vp. *Exit.*

Scena Quarta.

Enter Pisanio and Imogen.

Imo. Thou toldst me when we came fro horse, y place
Was nere at hand: Ne're long'd my Mother to
To see me first, as I haue now: *Pisanio*, Man:
Where is *Posthumus*? What is in thy mind
That makes thee stare thus? Wherefore breaks that sigh
From th'inward of thee? One, but painted thus
Would be interpreted a thing perplex'd
Beyond selfe-explication. Put thy selfe
Into a hauiour of lesse feare, ere wildnesse
Vanquish my Rayder Senses. What's the matter?
Why tender'st thou that Paper to me, with
A looke vtender? Is't be Summer Newes
Smile too't before: if Winterly, thou need'st
But keepe that count'nance still. My Husbands hand?
That Drug-damn'd Italy, hath out-craued him,
And hee's at some hard point. Speake man, thy Tongue
May take off some extremitie, which to reade
Would be euen mortall to me.

Pis. Please you reade,
And you shall finde me (wretched man) a thing
The most disdain'd of Fortune.

Imogen reads.

Thy Mistis (*Pisanio*) hath plaide the Strumpet in my
Bed: the Testimonies whereof, lyes bleeding in me. I speake
not out of weak Surmises, but from prooue as strong as my
greefe, and as certaine as I expect my Reuenge. That part, thou
(*Pisanio*) must abte for me, if thy Faith be not tainted with the
breach of hers: let thine owne hands take away her life: I shall
give thee opportunity at Milford Haven. She hath my Letter
for the purpose: where, if thou feare to strike, and to make mee
certaine it is done, thou art the Pander to her dishonour, and
equally to me displayall.

Pis. What shall I need to draw my Sword, the Paper
Hath cut her throat already? No, 'tis Slander,
Whose edge is sharper then the Sword, whose tongue
Out-venomes all the Wormes of Nyle, whose breath
Rides on the posting windes, and doth belye
All corners of the World. Kings, Queenes, and States,
Maides, Matrons, may the Secrets of the Graue
This viperous slander enters. What cheere, Madam?

Imo. False to his Bed? What is it to be false?
To lye in watch there, and to thinke on him?
To weepe 'twixt clock and clock, if sleep charge Nature,
To breake it with a fearfull dreame of him,
And cry my selfe awake? That's false to's bed? Is it?

Pis. Alas good Lady.

Imo. I false? Thy Conscience witness: *Iachimo*,
Thou didst accuse him of Incontinencie,
Thou then look'dst like a Villaine: now, me thinkest

Thy

Thy fauours good enough. Some say of Italy
(Whose mother was her painting) hath betraid him:
Poore I am stale, a Garment out of fashion,
And for I am richer then to hang by th' wallies,
I must be ript: To peeces with me: Oh!
Mens Vowes are womens Traitors. All good seeming
By thy reuolt (oh husband) shall be thought
Put on for Villainy; not borne where't growes,
But worne a Baite for Ladies.

Pis. Good Madam, heare me.

Imo. True honest men being heard, like false *Aeneas*,
Were in his time thought false: and *Synons* weeping
Did scandall many a holy teare: tooke pittie
From most true wretchednesse. So thou, *Posthumus*
Wilt lay the Leauen on all proper men;
Goodly, and gallant, shall be false and periur'd
From thy great faile: Come Fellow, be thou honest,
Do thou thy Masters bidding. When thou seest him,
A little witness my obedience. Looke
I draw the Sword my selfe, take it, and hit
The innocent Mansion of my Loue (my Heart):
Feare not, 'tis empty of all things, but Greefe:
Thy Master is not there, who was indeede
The riches of it. Do his bidding, strike,
Thou mayst be valiant in a better cause;
But now thou seem'st a Coward.

Pis. Hence vile Instrument,
Thou shalt not damne my hand.

Imo. Why, I must dye:

And if I do not by thy hand, thou art
No Seruant of thy Masters. Against Selfe-slaughter,
There is a prohibition so Divine,
That cratens my weak hand: Come, heere's my heart:
Something's a-foot: Soft, soft, wee'l no defence,
Obedient as the Scabbard. What is heere,
The Scriptures of the Loyall *Leonatus*,
All turn'd to Heresie? Away, away

Corrupters of my Faith, you shall no more
Be Stomachers to my heart: thus may poore Fooles
Believe false Teachers: Though those that are betraid
Do feele the Treason sharpe, yet the Traitor
Stands in worse case of woe. And thou *Posthumus*,
That didst set vp my disobedience 'gainst the King
My Father, and makes me put into contempt the suites
Of Princely Fellowes, shalt heereafter finde
It is no acte of common passage, but
A straine of Rarenesse: and I greeue my selfe,
To thinke, when thou shalt be disedg'd by her,
That now thou tyrest on, how thy memory
Will then be pang'd by me. Prythee dispatch,
The Lambe entreates the Butcher. Wher's thy knife?
Thou art too slow to do thy Masters bidding
When I desire it too.

Pis. Oh gracious Lady:
Since I receiud command to do this businesse,
I haue not slept one winke.

Imo. Doo't, and to bed then.

Pis. He wake mine eye-balles first.

Imo. Wherefore then

Didst vtter that? Why hast thou abus'd
So many Miles, with a pretence? This place?
Mine Action? and thine owne? Our Horses labour?
The Time inuirting thee? The perturb'd Court
For my being absent? whereunto I neuer
Purpose returne. Why hast thou gone so farre
To be vn-bent? when thou hast tane thy stand,

Th' elected Deere before thee?

Pis. But to win time
To loose so bad employment, in the which
I haue consider'd of a course: good Ladie
Heare me with patience.

Imo. Talke thy tongue weary, speake:
I haue heard I am a Strumpet, and mine care
Therein false strooke, can take no greater wound,
Nor tent, to bosome that. But speake.

Pis. Then Madam,
I thought you would not backe againe.

Imo. Most like,
Bringing me heere to kill me.

Pis. Not so neither:
But if I were as wise, as honest, then
My purpose would proue well: it cannot be,
But that my Master is abus'd. Some Villaine,
I and singular in his Art, hath done you both
This curdled iniurie.

Imo. Some Roman Curtezan?

Pis. No, on my life:
He giue but notice you are dead, and send him
Some bloody signe of it. For 'tis commanded
I should do so: you shall be mist at Court,
And that will well confirme it.

Imo. Why good Fellow,
What shall I do the while? Where bide? How liue?
Or in my life, what comfort, when I am
Dead to my Husband?

Pis. If you'l backe to th' Court.

Imo. No Court, no Father, nor no more adoe
With that harsh, noble, simple nothing:
That *Clotfen*, whose Loue-suite hath bene to me
As fearefull as a Siege.

Pis. If not at Court,
Then not in Britaine must you bide.

Imo. Where then?
Hath Britaine all the Sunne that shines? Day? Night?
Are they not but in Britaine? I'th' worlds Volume
Our Britaine seemes as of it, but not in't:
In a great Poole, a Swannes-nest, prythee thinke
There's liuers out of Britaine.

Pis. I am most glad
You thinke of other place: Th' Ambassador,
Lucius the Roman comes to Milford-Hauen
To morrow. Now, if you could weare a minde
Darke, as your Fortune is, and but disguise
That which t'appeare it selfe, must not yet be,
But by selfe-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty, and full of view: yea, happily, nere
The residence of *Posthumus*; so nie (at least)
That though his Actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your care,
As truly as he mooues.

Imo. Oh for such meanes,
Though perill to my modestie, not death on
I would adventure.

Pis. Well then, heere's the point:
You must forget to be a Woman: change
Command, into obedience. Feare, and Nicenesse
(The Handmaides of all Women, or more truly
Woman it pretty selfe) into a waggish courage,
Ready in gybes, quicke-answer'd, lawcie, and
As quarrellous as the Weazell: Nay, you must
Forget that rarest Treasure of your Cheeke,
Exposing it (but oh the harder heart,

Alacke